

T/50R/5/6/93

Z revue N°2

ITCH by Don
A law against it.
Regulations in force.
Ink.

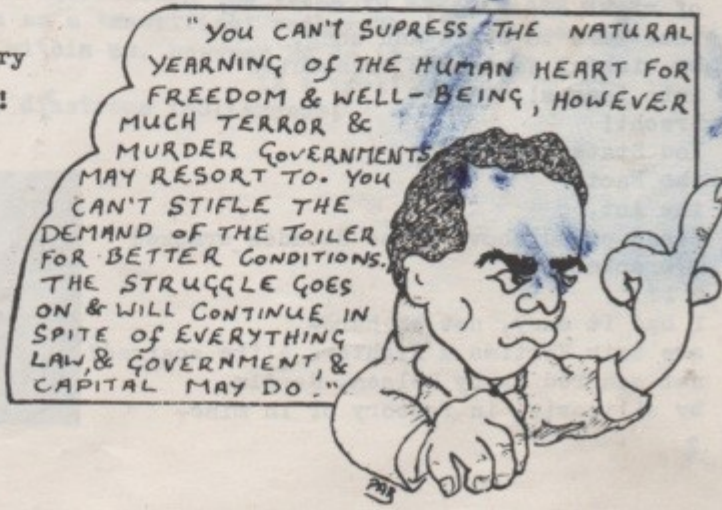


Norms against being
Too much relaxed, alive.
Ice.



Police to protect
Privilege of the rich
Iron.

Rules. Laws! The very
Damned idea of them!
Itch.



"YOU CAN'T SUPPRESS THE NATURAL
YEARNING OF THE HUMAN HEART FOR
FREEDOM & WELL-BEING, HOWEVER
MUCH TERROR &
MURDER GOVERNMENTS
MAY RESORT TO. YOU
CAN'T STIFLE THE
DEMAND OF THE TOILER
FOR BETTER CONDITIONS.
THE STRUGGLE GOES
ON & WILL CONTINUE IN
SPITE OF EVERYTHING
LAW, & GOVERNMENT, &
CAPITAL MAY DO."

TO Bertold Brecht, FIGHTER!

"Forgive us,
you who have an easier Time", wrote Bertold Brecht,
"For the roughness of our Voices, we who were
in the thick of blood & sorrow";
Forgive me,
if my nightmare frightens you—
these aren't much easier Times—
What is it — to forgive?
to forgive is when the gentleness wounded
by fight and fear would reassert itself,
with a desperation that leaves it weak!
Those who seek peace in War
will never find it,
but in moments rare;
to us to write not prophecies
but Epitaphs to the War of Words!

Poor Brecht! you thought we'd have
an easier Time, because you lived
in Struggle,
with the people,
But now it's legless battle
in the mind — that's Worse,
a disenchanted, mock-heroic verse!
A pain runs through my head with messages
of right and wrong,
that turn to tears and song,
by wishful fantasies transmuted
into images!
Brecht!
You State
the Fact,
the Act,
Stood proud above these decades wracked
& wrecked—
& I?
I had it easy, not so hard—
are both Victims & Fighters alike scarred?
not scarred as by Belsen, Napalm,
by silicosis, in factory or in mine—

But cut by green blade's edge
in summers warm,
by lonely nightwinds,
sharp as any thorn—
Forgive me, Love,
for saying that this life
is not as lovely
as I would make it for you!

On Sacrifice

Those who sacrifice the awareness of the NOW for the long-term
calculations or speculations of the future, deny to themselves
the VERY BEING of Life and Experience—

and so are fools!
Those who sacrifice all care for the future and all heed for the
past are like one adrift in a series of dream Visions,
nothing is lost and nothing is gained—

these likewise are fools!
Those who sacrifice all Art and Learning and Culture of our
Civilization by being concerned only with the struggles of a
Second Rate Society—OR only with survival in its harsh, material
sense, lose all sense of the basic Unity and balance of all things,
and many ideals and alternatives—

these likewise are fools!
Those who sacrifice all concern with the Struggles of here and
now and survival for general abstract knowledge of our culture
(which is endless) build a mansion on a quicksand—

and these too are fools!
He who ever thinks of sacrificing one thing to another, or ever
thinks of any action as a 'sacrifice' rather than an expression
of the urge to life within us, however he do it—

is a fool!
Our world is full of disastrous foolishness!



The ANARCHIST of Bethnal Green

A refutation of the WICKED AGITATOR, as played to enormous success at all LEADING MUSIC HALLS.

The SCENE is a poverty-stricken basement in Bethnal Green. FRANNIE is lying in bed. BILL (a no'er-do-well anarchist agitator) enters.

BILL: Ah, Frannie, me old comrade, how are you this evening?

FRANNIE: Oh, poorly, Bill, poorly. I needs me medicine, and not a penny to buy it with.

BILL: Cursed capitalists! Did you remember to get my Guinness? Ah (swigs) great stuff - what a pity the brewers are all Tories Hard hearted villains - a woman pining for want of medicine and they going along in their carriages (swigs). A wife in a million you've been to me, my dear. When the revolution comes and everyone is equal, you'll have twice as much as the whole damn lot of 'em. When I think of you turning the mangle all day long for the idle rich while I'm out spouting to me fellow workers, it makes my blood boil. You wouldn't be lying in bed if you

This dramatic offering was sent to us by Albert Meltzer, with the note:

"As best as I recall it, this was popular in the music-halls until as late as the 1920's. Was it John Lawson who played the agitator? I have had to reconstruct most of it, but the sentiments are untouched. Would they be able to get away with it today? Perhaps so - but it is worth a laugh."

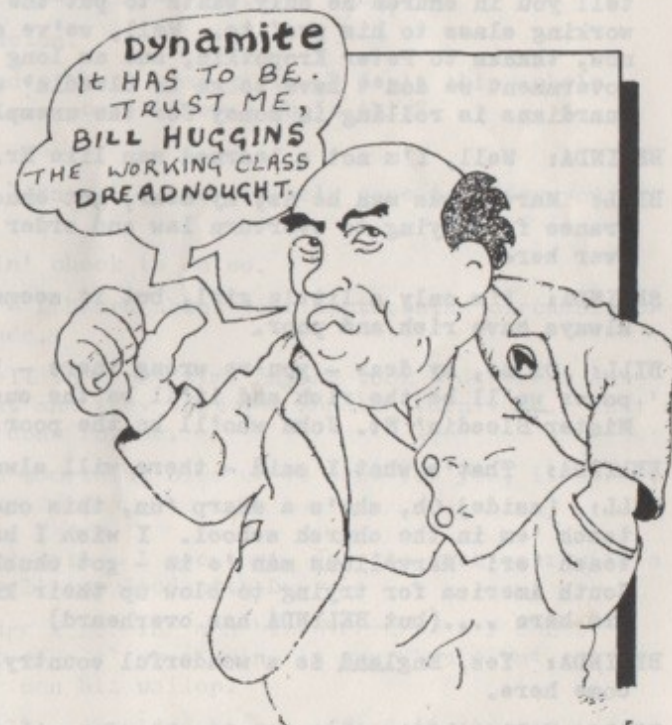
hadn't stood out in the pouring rain selling my revolutionary pamphlets while I was in the booser talking over me comrades to stop work. But you'll be revenged just wait till I've made my bomb I'll blow 'em all up - landlords - capitalists - kings - everyone who can't show a dirty pair of hands.

FRANNIE: Ah - Bill - you'll never fail in that respect. But I sometimes wonder, Bill - is it right what we're doing - blowing up people - is it just?

BILL: Right? Of course it's right are you going stupid or something? Aint we workers and don't they give us work - or would do if we didn't have a union to fight our case for us. Oh, I see what you mean - is it right blowing them up we could carve them up into little pieces or give them poison no, it won't work. It aint practical. They keep too much to themselves. Dynamite it 'as to be. Trust me, Bill Huggins the Working Class Dreadnought (mocking heard) Oh my gord - who's that at the door?

Enter BELINDA.

BELINDA: It's only me - Belinda - can I come in?



FRANNIE: Oh, do, my little darling you always bring me good things. I don't know what I'd do without you.

BELINDA: Oh dear, is the strike still on then?

BILL: Well, it's on now permanent-like as you might say. But don't worry your little head I'll soon be making a bomb! Heheheh! Little she knows!

BELINDA: I brought some soup. Mr. St John is re-opening the factory in Vallance Road that was closed down after the last strike made it unprofitable for the management to carry on. You may be able to get work there, Mr. Huggins.

BILL: Yes, I dare say. I know all about that. Cussed capitalist. Comes down here to exploit the workers. Wait 'till he opens his factory, that's what I say. He'll soon find his shares are going up (aside) and his bleedin' factory.

BELINDA: Oh dear - I thought Mr. St. John was such a good kind Christian man. He always gives me money for the unemployed, and when he told us at church that he was going to open the factory we all cheered. We thought it would alleviate distress.

BILL: Work never did that, my dear (aside) only beer! They don't tell you in church he only wants to put the labour value of the working class to his profits. Well, we've seen through it all now, thanks to Peter Kropotkin, and as long as we don't want no government we don't have to go to bleedin' work - the Board of Guardians is rolling in money for the unemployed.

BELINDA: Well, I'm not a learned man like Mr. Kropotkin

BILL: Marvellous man he is, my dear, got chucked out of Russia and France for trying to overturn law and order so we invited him over here.

BELINDA: I'm only a little girl, but it seems to me you will always have rich and poor.

BILL: Of no, my dear - you're wrong there - 'cause when we 'as the power we 'll be the rich and it'll be the cussed capitalists like Mister Bleedin' St. John who'll be the poor.

BELINDA: That's what I said - there will always be rich and poor.

BILL: (aside) Oh, she's a sharp 'un, this one! That's what they teach 'em in the church school. I wish I had Malatesta 'ere to teach 'er! Marvellous man 'e is - got chucked out of Italy and South America for trying to blow up their kings, so we invited him here (but BELINDA has overheard)

BELINDA: Yes, England is a wonderful country. Everybody wants to come here.

BILL: Well, that's where you're bloody well wrong, my dear -

because me and Frannie would be away like a shot if we 'ad the money. Bethnal Green aint the bloody Riviera for a person in 'er condition - nor in mine for that matter.

BELINDA: Oh - that is thoughtless of me - I was forgetting poor Mrs. Huggins health. I wonder if we could raise the money from our friends at church.

BILL: I wouldn't touch it - I wouldn't demean myself - (aside) of course she could always go along and pick it up.....

FRANNIE: I'd love to go somewhere like Australia or New Zealand and start afresh. Me sister went to one of them places - Toronto I think it was. All that hard work and fresh air....

BILL: Makes yer bleedin' shudder, don't it?

FRANNIE: But of course it would be against Bill's anarchist principles to take help from a religious organisation - otherwise we could have got the Sally Besh to have sent us. But it wouldn't be the same thing getting money from the church people - they wouldn't expect to get it back again.

BELINDA: I'll see what I can do - I hope I can do something - I'll just take my basket and go now. I hope you soon get better, Mrs. Huggins - that is - well - I.....oh, excuse me

Belinda exits in confusion.

BILL: Sometimes I wonder about that girl - I don't think she's bleedin' all there cor blimey - who's this?

Enter Mr. ST JOHN.

FRANNIE: It's Mr. St John - I wonder if he's come to offer you work.

BILL: Like his bleedin' check to do so.

Mr. ST JOHN: Huggins - I heard about your distressing circumstances from little Belinda.

BILL: Oh did you? Well the last time anyone took a distress out on me it was for rent and they took the soddin' furniture. That's what your class has done for me.

Mr. ST JOHN: There is something else we've done for you, it seems.

BILL: Oh - what?

Mr. ST JOHN: (smiling) Well - I see that, despite your poor wife's condition, you are well supplied with beer.

BILL: Oh yes - begrudge a working man his pleasures - I don't suppose you're short of a glass o' wine in your house but you begrudge the working man his wallop.

Mr. ST JOHN: Not at all - provided he can afford it, by working

hard and diligently at his trade - he is entitled to his pleasures - in moderation. But not to get vilely drunk and insult his betters and put himself out of employment so that he is a prey to foreign agitators.



BILL: (pushes basket in his hands) Oh yes? I'll give you foreign agitators - take this basket (strikes match and throws into basket). And here's a little light for your darkness.

Mr. ST JOHN: Be careful man - you nearly burned a Holy Bible.

BILL: A Holy Bible?

Mr. ST JOHN: And some improving tracts.... and some teabags.... and a little bowl of soup....

FRANNIE: Oh, Bill! Bill! - that's little Belinda's basket you've shoved at Mr. St John....

BILL: Yes - and she's got mine with the bleedin' bomb! Oh my Gord - that poor little gel!

Mr. ST JOHN: Now you see where your doctrines have led you. (Runs out)

BILL: Oh Gord - Oh Gord - Frannie.... why did I ever do it? - that poor little gel....

FRANNIE: Of Bill - Bill - if Gord pardons that little gel and gets

her safe out of this, let's promise never to mix ourselves up in politics again!

CHRISTMAS



BILL &

FRANNIE: Oh Gord - Gord.... pardon us.... pardon us....

BELINDA: (Enters) Oh Mr. Huggins - I've been to my father and he says he can get the church committee to get you out of the country to one of the colonies.

BILL: Oh my Gord.... what happened to your basket?

BELINDA: Well - I only had a little soup left so I thought there might be some unemployed anarchists who would want it - and as I didn't have anyone else to call on and thought that some of my pamphlets on Jesus might interest Kropotkin and Malatesta I left the basket at the Anarchist Hall - near the stove to keep the soup warm.

Mr. ST JOHN: (Enters) Thank Heaven you're safe my dear.... that basket of yours contained dynamite!

BELINDA: Oh no - oh no....

BILL: I didn't mean it for her, did I? I was only acting on behalf of the working classes - and now she's gone and damaged some of their property....

Mr. ST JOHN: But you intended to blow up the capitalists property and it is even more precious to him - not only is it worth more - it is all he has to earn his living from - not possessing the brute strength or the ready wit to gain a crust any other way. Anyway, I have brought you a real representative of the working classes.... a fine British working man - one of the best we breed - loyal to his masters; sober; reliable; steady in his duties - a man who never listens to agitators - is never unemployed - and above all never goes on strike!

BILL: Garn - there aint no such person - oh my Gord - it's a

policeman!



Mr. ST JOHN: Yes, a policeman - and you will get your just desserts - though I fear you have only been a tool in the hands of far more sinister people.

BILL: I'll do my bird willingly... I've changed - nobody don't know how.... I'll have one last swig of Guinness before I go because it's a shame to waste money but that's the last.... Frannie, my dear, wait for me - we'll bleedin' well emigrate and I'll be a new character - I'll work hard and treat you right - I can see now what a fool I've been.

BELINDA: I'll pray for you Mr. Huggins.

Mr. ST JOHN: And I'll see to it that you get work.

FRANNIE: And I'll make sure you never drink or spout again.

BILL: With friends like this around you, you can face prison easy. So goodbye to anarchism and Bethnal Bleedin' Green.



Charles HICKSON

CHRISTMAS

on this morning
not bare
or crucified with red birds

I sit alone
watching for a
heat of joy
to rise

from the road
the anticipated miracle
as told in lies
spread along time

about a green
hill stripped
ready for a
birth

loot turned
from booty
into bribes by
guilty kings

presents frightening
a killers bad
dream like
the oxen

slaughtered for
necessity I
await on empty stall

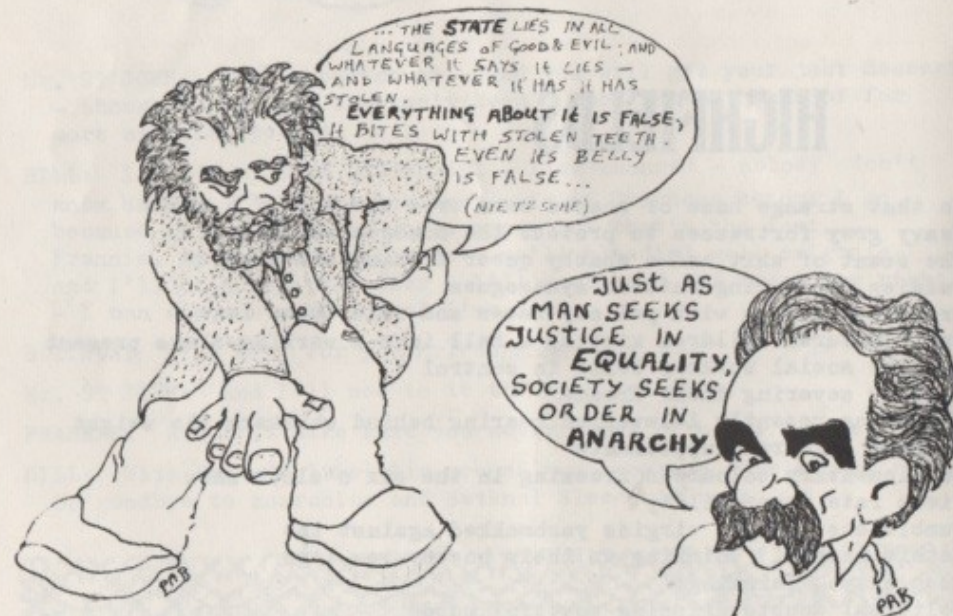
a child brainless
in the wild.

HIGHFIELDS

Is that strange haze of shanes seen from the top of a crane
Heavy grey fortresses to protect the homogenised poor
The scent of shit and a shabby queer flashing his ankles
Paddies fermenting outside synagogues
Organised ladies with yellowy faces and voluptuous legs
Multicoloured children kicking a ball into a working-class present
Healthy social workers being in control
candour severing their dreams
The young recently A-levelled bearing behind whiskers the weight
of many coloured supplements
Supplementary coloureds freezing in the six o'clock snow
Piece rate venerability
Bumble-bee striped virgins yashmakked against the
Gothic horror. Thinking as their hockey-raw legs
Rush away. Thinking!
Political doubts dripping powerful words

into middle class neckties
 Nice lady social workers in tinted glasses keeping
 golden wings folded away in their handbags
 Adventure playgrounds being adventurous in riskless non-play areas
 Sikh women floating through the Sunday morning like coloured paper
 Minds dancing behind a hippy
 Blood and bruises bearing a harmless angel
 Men of God and dollybirds zooming around six feet above us
 Pilgrims and panthers pinning clichés to the peeling air
 The old being old, the necessary embarrassment
 The rest of us wringing out our wounds for
 the sun to return.

Note - Highfields is a red-bricked late nineteenth century housing area of Leicester inhabited by a few fading remnants of its one time lower-middle-class gentility; a small West-Indian population; a large Asian population; some working-class natives (and a few of us middle-class ones); assorted students, whores and general riff-raff like cops and social workers (the latter don't actually live here but its a great place to try out your ideas).



Lillian WOLFE

LILLIAN'S VOICE AGAIN

I cannot say much about prison life as I was in hospital. The only other prisoner I came in contact with, and very briefly, was the prisoner in the next cell, who was made to clean my cell. She took the opportunity to pinch my hairpins. She had a young baby. One day the baby started yelling. One of the wardresses shouted up to her to stop it, which she immediately did. I suppose she gave it an extra feed. There was only one person who was really horrible. It was the clergyman. Perhaps he hated me because I was an atheist. One day he came in and shouted at me that I was German. After that I lived in terror that they would deport me to Germany, and I might never see Tom again. Woolf, as I spelt my name then, really can be a German one, but my father always said that the family originally came from Holland. Anyway it had been around in Liverpool for a long time. Life was boring. I was always afraid I would finish my library book before the next one was due. I was even driven to read the bible. That was always available. After a while I asked if I could do some sewing and they gave me some muslin bags to make. I was under the impression that they were cushion covers for the creche. They were twelve or fourteen inches square. I discovered that they were tea bags to make the prison tea. They thought I was quite mad because I asked for some of the water into which they had boiled all the goodness of the cabbages they gave us. They catered for my vegetarianism to the best of their ability and I got an apple a day. They happened to be nice colourful ones, so I kept them all day so as to have something pretty to look at. If I left any food they became alarmed as they were afraid I would fast like some of the Suffragettes had done. Often when I returned to the cell after exercise or a bath I found my bedclothes scattered all over the floor. They had been searching. There was no mirror. The only time I saw my face was in the bath taps. After my release I went to see Tom. Poor man! He was terribly upset at the indignity of having to talk to me through close wire mesh. The first words of the girl who came to meet me when I was released were to tell me of the suicide of one of my best friends, of whom I was very fond.

The only effect this prison experience had on my attitude towards life and politics was to make me, if anything, more strongly anarchist than before. After the trial there was no Black Maria available, so I was sent to Holloway in a cab with a woman who was up for drunkenness. We were left alone for a few minutes on arrival, and she asked me if I had any 'Snow'. The

current name for dope of some sort I discovered later.

When it became evident that our group in the Civil Service Socialist Society were anarchists we decided to start a paper to be called The Voice Of Labour. There had been a paper before with this title. We had a meeting to decide how to start it. One comrade, Mabel Hope, who was a very able writer, had been in touch with Tom Keell, and he came to the meeting with a watching brief for 'Freedom'. We were all very inexperienced in such matters, and we talked and talked without being able to come to any conclusions. We were feeling very frustrated when Tom got up and in a few words put it all straight for us. I said to the comrade next to me; 'Why couldn't that man have spoken before?' I felt quite annoyed with him. So those were my first feelings for him! But we soon became great friends and he used to come and see me in a nice little flat I had at that time. Then one of the boys and I determined to start a Communal House instead of us all paying individual rents, and we found a suitable one in Wecklenburg Street, WCL, where Tom soon joined us.

I found him the first man with whom I could discuss everything in life. He used to work at Freedom Press until very late, sometimes till midnight. After he joined us at Marsh House I used to have a meal ready for him, and then we used to wash up together and talk. Before he joined us the only meals he had at the office were bread and cheese and tea. His only property then was a small tin trunk containing books and photographs. We went for country walks together, and the more we saw of each other the more our affection grew, and was finally expressed on top of a bus coming back from a walk. He always lived very simply in all ways, only taking from Freedom funds enough to enable him to work there with no salary at all. He was never comfortably off until he took his pension from his union, and only then because we lived at Whiteways Colony, and he grew most of our food as we were vegetarians. When I first knew him I used to go when I left work and do the accounts for him, so I knew how hard up Freedom Press always was, and how hard he worked. As a compositor he was noted for being able to do this work without mistakes, whilst at the same time carrying on a spirited discussion with a comrade.

The happiest days of my life were the twenty years we had together till he died. My most miserable days were those I spent with my sister when she became ill and the doctor said she must never again live alone. So I had to suddenly leave Freedom Press, then at Fulham, and live with her in a Cheltenham flat she had just bought. She had become a very selfish old woman, five years older than me. It was hard to realise that she was the nice, kind, older sister she had been to me when we were young.

For a truly happy love-life it must include the same ideas and interests in general, but with much tolerance where they differ at times. Love without companionship is not love. It is only sex. It will not last. Why should it?

I don't feel particularly old and never did. I have been very lucky. Good health since I became a vegetarian, and a constant interest in life since I realised that I was an Anarchist. The only time I feel really old is when people insist on helping me. I certainly won't want to go on if I become unable to look after myself, but I don't think this will happen to me.

I think I was born an Anarchist and events in my life just enabled me to realise that that was what I was. The first time I remember doing a definite Anarchist thing was when I was in the Civil Service Union. I saw very clearly that the Executive Officers of our branch discouraged rather than encouraged us to attend meetings. This meant no opposition to them! So when at a yearly conference a girl came and asked me to stand for the Executive I consented and was elected. And there I saw more clearly still what was going on. These men really aped politicians. So, for the next conference I had a leaflet printed saying what was going on. These men really set up as leaders. The leaflet ended: "So if you want to be led please don't vote for me." And they didn't.

I first began to help Freedom Press when it was at Ossulton Street where I helped with the book work in the evenings when still at the Post Office. When it moved to Willesden and Ludgate Hill I addressed wrappers for Freedom and helped send them out. When at Cheltenham and Stroud we lived at Whiteway Colony and I helped Tom (Keell) with reading the proofs. In 1941 the Freedom Group in London had a bookshop in Red Lion Passage which was completely destroyed by an incendiary bomb. They then went to a large flat in Belsize Road and in 1943 when I retired I joined them there, looking after the flat and doing office work. After a time they asked me to take charge of the Freedom Bookshop in Bristol. I stayed four months until they found another comrade to do it. Later on, three of the comrades were arrested, charged with conspiracy and disaffection, and sentenced to nine months imprisonment. The landlord gave us notice. Our next move was to Red Lion Street where we remained from 1945 to 1960 when the lease ran out. The premises were sold and the new landlord put up the rent from £4 to £20 a week. Of course we couldn't possibly afford that. Our next move was to Fulham where we stayed until 1967 when we moved to our present

premises at Whitechapel.

Someone really ought to write a history of Freedom Press with proper research into personnel, work, publications etc.. It would be well worthwhile."

DEFYING THE ACT - being extracts from an article that appeared in The Daily News for June 26th 1916

At Clerkenwell Police court on Saturday Thomas H. Keell and Lilian Gertrude Woolf, were summoned, for that, on April 21, they did unlawfully and contrary to the Defence of the Realm (Consolidation) Regulations make certain statements in the form of a leaflet, headed "The Voice of Labour," dated April 15, and containing an article entitled "Defying the Act," which said statements were likely to prejudice the recruiting and discipline of H. M. Forces.

Keell was further summoned for that in preparing to print for publication a statement headed "The Irish Rebellion" he did act preparatory to unlawfully attempting to cause sedition and disaffection amongst the civilian population.....

Counsel read the article, "Defying the Act" at length. It was an attack on conscription as "the greatest triumph for military despotism unparalleled in modern history." It concluded, "Let us be outlaws, and out on the Scottish hills live the free life of outlaws.".....

Keell said he did not wish to deny anything said or written by him. As an anarchist he denied that Governments were for the benefit of the people but for a small ruling class. He denied the right of the so-called State to compel a man to be a soldier whether he considered it right or not. "Honourable," "learned," and "gallant" gentlemen had lied about conscription, and some people were banded together, even in the Scottish hills, to resist the Act. He denied the right - he could not deny the might - of the State to take his body, but his imprisonment would not alter the point of view of comrades.

Mr. Bros fined the woman £25, with the alternative of two months imprisonment, she saying she should not think of paying the money. On the second summons it was suggested that Keell preached an extension of the Irish Revolt. This, he said, might have been cancelled.

Mr. Bros said the second summons was not proved. On the first summons he imposed a fine of £100 or three months.

Nigel GRAY

CRUCIFIXION

To Rev. Nicholson, rector of the church of St. Mary the Virgin, Burghfield and leading member of the National Front.

Are you advertising
a crucifixion
outside your church this Easter
have you found
a suitable
long haired
bearded man
in strange clothes
who talks to animals and children
who loves people
black or white
indiscriminately
who doesn't work
who preaches love
who teaches the poor
and helps those in need
who is a poet
like Blake
iconoclast
and prophet
like Blake
who wrote Jerusalem
the battle hymn of the revolution
who hates
like Blake
the poverty of the rich
and the religion
of churchmen
like you
who believe in white supremacy
in the rule of the elite
who use the name of Christ
to spread disease
for every word you spew
from your pulpit
is a thorn
in the mind
of faith

every sentence you evacuate
into your church magazine
is a spear in the side
of hope
every time you vomit
white is right
you pound another nail into the
extended palm
of charity
your hate
can break the body
of good
and spill the blood
of love
and your kiss of betrayal
the kiss of death

This Easter there will be
a crucifixion
at your church
and as you tear the flesh
as you splinter the bone
of the long haired man
who whispers
love
will recognition light in your
eye
or with his body so contorted
his features so distorted with
pain
will you see only the ugliness
and spit in his face.

Old Bailey DiARY

Trial in Court-I2 of I4 Pacifists accused of both Incitement to Disaffection & Conspiracy.

Monday 29th Sept.

Stand outside the Old Bailey in middle of picket: selling Peace News & Freedom to solicitors, journalists and passing workers. On banners & leaflets 'Drop the Conspiracy Charges: Defend Free Speech.' Security tight because of Guildford Pub-bombs' Trial.

Tuesday 30th.

Sit inside Public Gallery. Like a theatre. Even down to 'prompters' who look like men from the DPP (Department of Public Prosecutions.) Finely clipped moustaches; military looking gentlemen who may well turn out to be from some section of Army Intelligence seconded to Special Branch? I noticed their large desknotebooks were WD stock. (War Department issue). Judge naturally sits on high. Defendants opposite in Dock - guarded by Her Majesty's Prison Officers', one either side.....and this for defendants who are not on remand. This practice must surely influence some members of jury into believing they must be guilty of something otherwise why the uniformed men? Some Seventy-Seven jurors 'challenged' by defendants - rejected! Just by quick snap judgement. No questions allowed by judge, not even 'Is any member of your family serving in the Armed Forces at present?' All they could do was reject the dodgery, ex-army, 'do your duty' types. Their chosen jury includes 5 women and 4 African/Asians. Solicitors & Barristers number some twentyfour ... Defence Counsel include Larry Grant from the NCCL (National Council for Civil Liberties, Kings Cross Road, WCI) Lord Gifford & Louis Blom-Cooper.

Wednesday October 1st.

Prosecutor trying to establish 'ringleaders' - I wonder was it coincidence that Bill Hetherington got charged with trying to 'seduce sailor from his duty' or was the 'sailor' planted on his train? This happened after the initial charges of the I4 and could well be to bolster the 'leader' behind the scenes theory! In evening went to Albert Hall for concert of Chilean music. Sold papers and handed out hundreds of leaflets, shouting out 'Conspiracy Trial leaflets: Some Information For Discontented Soldiers in current issue of Peace News 'Given free ticket for concert! Some Spanish people chant out 'Franco Assassino' and cry taken up by most people so that it rang around Queen Victoria's Albert. Chilean music taking

the same role as, say, Mikis Theodorakis modern bouzouki music has for Greece. Political, based on traditional folk music, but a new form and spirit.

Thursday 2nd.

Judge rules that the Pat Arrowsmith case - where similar leaflet was used - Some Information For British Soldiers - can be cited and that it is relevant to this case - where the I4 have been giving away copies of Some Information For Discontented Soldiers! Pat was recognised and supported by Amnesty International as a political prisoner. According to the prosecutor: "Not simply a question of having leaflet but intent to distribute it" - yet again: "There's no reason why soldiers shouldn't be informed of legal rights." Certainly, but in practice it is doubtful whether they are, except and unless they kick up such a fuss to get out that they find out about rights and procedures to leave the armed forces: and this they will more than likely find out from pacifist groups like the Central Board for Conscientious Objectors - from At Ease or British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign; 5 Caledonian Road, LONDON N.1.

And of course this is the very reason that the Campaign exists: because if troops were fully aware of their rights they would often take up the option of not continuing their service - they would refuse to fight in Northern Ireland for example.

The trial goes on, and is likely to keep on going on for two months or more. You can help in very simple and practical ways:-

1. By contacting the Defence Campaign at Box 69, 197 Kings Cross Road, LONDON. WCI for leaflets, posters and badges.
2. Organize local meetings - get the Defence Campaign to help get speakers.
3. Write to the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign (5 Caledonian Road, LONDON, N.1. for leaflets, literature, copies of 'offensive' leaflet!

These eleven men and three women have put their bodies on the line - well the State has decided to prosecute them: and also for 'Conspiracy's monstrous charge of open-ended sentence upto 'Life'. Where you only have to be seen to be acquainted through an address list or being friend of someone who has committed or simply has the intent to commit a 'crime'! (See NCCL pamphlet: Whose Conspiracy. (50p) 186, Kings Cross Rd, London WCI)

ABSENT FRIENDS

Every country in the world has political prisoners, people who are serving prison sentences because of what they believe in, or because of what they have done as a result of their beliefs. The following selection has been made from those political prisoners in the British Isles whose sentences were imposed because they allegedly carried out acts against the state.

In July 1974 three Irish anarchists were sentenced for various offences; armed robbery, possession of firearms, possession of explosive substances, conspiring to cause explosions.

Bob Cullen got a 7 year sentence; Desie Keane a 5 year sentence; Columba Longmore a 4 year sentence. Including their time on remand before and during their trial they have all been inside for nearly 2 years now, but they all remain quite cheerful and resolute. All are avid readers and will be glad to receive any books - which prison regulations require to be new, not secondhand. They are also grateful to receive glossy magazines like Mayfair/Penthouse sort. They can also receive letters with no snarl-ups' to any or all of them at:

Military Detention Barracks
Curragh Camp
Co. Kildare
Eire.

Also the following are serving 10 year sentences imposed after the two 'Angry Brigade' trials. Jake Prescott was sentenced to 15 years in December 1971 for conspiracy to cause explosions. This was later reduced on appeal to 10 years. after the second 'Angry Brigade' trial resulted in the following sentences, all imposed in December 1972 and all for 'conspiracy to cause explosions.' Jim Greenfield- 10 years: John Barker-10 years: Anna Mendelson-10-years: Hillary Creek -10 years.

None of these five was found guilty of causing any explosions, simply of conspiring to cause them! It is a fine legal point, but it can be argued that it is not legal to find somebody guilty of conspiracy if they are found not guilty on the substantive charge. (However Dennis Warren, the last Shrewsbury Picket 'leader', was also found guilty only on the conspiracy charge; and the current trial of 14 pacifists for 'conspiracy to incite disaffection' among the troops has already seen the prosecution establish that

'conspiracy' can be tried whether a substantive charge is put or not!)

You can write to these comrades, though letters are not certain to get through to them, due to varying interpretations at different prisons.

Jake Prescott
H.M. Prison
Hedon Road
HULL, Yorks.

Jim Greenfield
H.M. Prison
Wakefield
Yorks.

John Barker
H.M. Prison
Long Lartin
Worcestershire.

Anna Mendelson & Hillary Creek, H.M. Prison, Holloway, London N7.

There is a Welfare Committee to look after the long-term needs of these prisoners during their sentences. Contributions of cash and books to:-

Stoke Newington Five Welfare Committee,
Box 252,
240 Camden High Street, London NW1.



From: J.W.

"Colin Ward remarks in his interesting article on being an ex-editor that, 'I imagine that the members of the Freedom Group for example would retort that they would be happy to relinquish their responsibilities if they had found a replacement team really likely to take them over responsibly, previous attempts not having been happy.' One wonders what

he means and whether what he imagines is a way of putting his own view across. It reminds me of colonialists' remarks about Africa: 'We gave that chap Nkrumah independence but he showed little responsibility; became a bloody dictator. So how can you expect us to leave Kenya and Rhodesia, just to let the rabble take over! We'd go, of course, if we thought these people, who are little more than children you know, would carry out their responsibilities in the way we define them!' Well?"

BOOK REVIEWS

Phil Ruff



EL QUICO

SABATE: GUERRILLA EXTRAORDINARY by Antonio Telles
translated by Stuart Christie.
Davis-Poynter. £3.50
Cienfuegos Press Bookclub Ed. £2.35

When Professor Hobsbawm devoted a chapter of his book on Bandits to Francisco Sabate Llopart few in Britain had heard the name before. In Spain 'El Quico' Sabate was already a legend. Hobsbawm's character was an 'ideological gun-fighter' to be compared with the outlaws of the American West and Spain's own Don Quixote in order to bolster up the author's marxist arguments against anarchist resistance fighters. Until the appearance of Franco's Prisoner written by one of Sabate's contemporaries, Miguel Garcia, nothing existed in English to counter that view. Now, at last, the original source of Hobsbawm's facts is also available to set matters right. Following the fascist victory in Spain, Franco set about completing the physical destruction of all working-class organisations. With their unions smashed and most of their comrades dead, imprisoned or forced into exile, those that remained inside Spain were pushed into a clandestine existence. The slow, secret process of rebuilding the CNT within the factories began immediately after Franco's seizure of power. It has been repressed again and again since then, but is still continuing to regain its strength today. Faced with physical attacks by the state, the Spanish militants had either to resist or be guilty of aiding their own destruction by virtue of

their in-action. It was in this situation of repression that the armed resistance, of which Sabate was a part, arose.

Sabate never considered himself an elitist opposing the mass action of the working-class, as his critics accuse.

"Sabate's aim was always clearly defined - to act! It never crossed his mind to create his own organization to compete with the parent body. Sabate belonged body and soul to the CNT, and his only desire was to make it an effective tool of the class struggle - returning to it the strength it should never have lost." (p.116)

Neither did he delude himself that his actions were the vanguard of the revolution. His life proved, as Stuart Christie points out in the introduction to the book, that urban guerrillas "... are the rearguard and know only too well that the army of the revolution can only be the workers themselves. The most they can do is cover up the attacks made on the people in retreat."

If Tellez's book points to any single flaw in Sabate's struggle, it is the fact that he clung to the 'legal' CNT in exile (as distinct from the militants still inside Spain) too closely. It took the deaths of many of the best resistance fighters before the combat groups finally learnt that they could only exist effectively by relying on their own autonomy.

But having learnt the lesson well, Sabate went on fighting with increased vigour, expropriating banks to finance the struggle, spreading propaganda and hitting at the Francoist ruling-class unceasingly until he became the most hated and feared enemy of Franco. Tellez's book is full of the most amazing examples of Sabate's determination to hit back. Not only armed actions but acts which by their very audacity ridicule the fascist dictatorship - riding through the streets of Barcelona in a taxi distributing anti fascist leaflets by mortar during a visit by Franco; arriving at factories to play tape-recorded speeches to their workers; striking at the very heart of tyranny. All the time showing the Spanish people that the possibility to defend themselves still existed. Demonstrating that "... the individual is never helpless; the possibility of rebelling and defending an idea which one considers to be just, is always present, even in the most unfavourable and adverse conditions..." (Tellez)

Tellez's book is not intended either as a biography of Sabate or a psychological study. The author claims only that it is a cameo for future writers to fill in the details. What it does is to sketch the struggle of the Spanish resistance, reflected through one of its most courageous pioneers, as it really is. The story of 'El Quico' is the story of a struggle that is still going on today, neglected by those on the 'package deal' left who claim to be the

future harbingers of a free society, but as resolute as ever to win.

To those who choose to ignore the struggle in Spain, the words of Sabate himself:

" Words can never be substituted for actions. If you love freedom above all else then you must be prepared to fight for it, unceasingly and untiringly, and, if necessary die for it. "

Until a more complete account of the resistance is written Sabate is the best introduction to the subject available.

John BOOTH

You know there's a WAR on?

'THE BODYGUARD' & 'WARTIME' by Adrian Mitchell

Adrian Mitchell writes brilliant, funny, smocking stories which shake you up and make you think.

Len Rossman, the 'Bodyguard' in the earlier book, protects Top People in a fascist England of the future. He thinks he's the best in the business, and still thinks so as every assignment fails, again and again, more and more spectacularly. Society is cracking up and Rossman is the last to see it. Outside every city live the armies of 'subverts', hiding in the piled-up rubbish of capitalism and striking ever harder at Rossman's world. Rossman's last job turns out to be his biggest failure and he is captured by subverts - among them his own admired boss - as the revolution triumphs all over Europe.

Mitchell paints a grim picture of the way society could develop, with ordinary people under the heel of an alliance of thugs, bishops and Tories. But the ultimate feeling is optimistic, since the State is not after all invulnerable.....

'Wartime', his more recent novel, hangs a question mark over the future - and exposes the present as well as anything I've read lately. A mad Tory colonial catches three boys poaching on his estate and persuades them to avoid punishment by playing a stalking game in which one of them, Jack, loses an eye. The colonel then shoots himself rather than face the publicity. Lorna, the colonel's daughter, devotes her life to revenge on the three boys.

She destroys Jack through pity - taking him in; sleeping with him; playing on his fears of the bomb; and drugging him into total mind-

less submission.

She destroys Rodney through flattery - admiring his poetry; pulling strings to get 'good' jobs for him; marrying him; and making him her creature - an unwitting tool of the ruling class.

With Mike she fails. Mike goes through the CND into revolutionary politics and eventually rescues Jack from Lorna's clutches.

'Wartime' is a good novel and an accurate description of how the working class responds to its exploitation in capitalist society. Mike is everybody who rebels, who is aware of the exploitation, and who fights to overthrow capitalism. Rodney is everybody who sells out, tempted by money and comfort and status - becomes a part of the ruling class and despises those who don't do likewise. Jack is the most terrifying - being everybody who accepts things the way they are because they are too beaten, too dulled, to question anything - drugged into accepting servility because they can't even see that they are slaves.

'Wartime' leaves the future open - will the ruling class continue to exploit the rest of us - or will we wake up and throw the parasites off our backs - Mitchell doesn't say here. But this book describes beautifully the war in which we are all fighting for life - the class war of capitalism that gives the book its title.

GEORGE WOODCOCK

A Plausible ANARCHY

Anarchy In Action - Colin Ward. (Allen&Unwin)
Hardback £3.50. Paperback £1.75

Colin Ward's tone in Anarchy in Action is quiet, self-effacing; there is no stridently individual style, no attempt at proselytisation, but merely a reasonable voice revealing of us matters that immediately appear self-evident; the effort is less to convince than to persuade, and less to persuade than to point out. Yet the voice persists, the reasonableness controls and consolidates its statements, and in the end we have a result not unlike Ward's achievement during his ten years of editing Anarchy, which his hardly visible hand shaped into the best of all English-language anarchist periodicals and perhaps the best of all anarchist periodicals without any territorial or historical justification.

There is a link between

tone and style of writing and quality of political thought which Orwell very clearly indicated in Nineteen Eighty-Four and in essays like Politics and the English Language: using the term 'political' in its broad Orwellian definition (though personally I would prefer 'civil') one finds in Anarchy in Action a very clear relation between the way of writing, the way of thought, and the vision created in the reader's mind by the conjunction of writing and thought. The quiet writing manner, plain yet strong in speech, suits the cast of thought, which is devoid of the baroque illusions of power or of the hope of society changed not by the enunciation of some new and dramatic myth, of some utopian promise, but by the undramatic use of what lies to hand already in our lives. "If you want to build a free society", Ward remarks, "the parts are all to hand."

Essentially, Anarchy in Action is a manual on how to recognize the parts that are to hand. It is not a history of direct action, or an attempt to survey intensively all the ways in which the spontaneous constructiveness of human beings has manifested itself in society since the beginning of history. That was largely done, in an unco-ordinated way, by nineteenth-century anarchists and by the libertarian-orientated anthropologists and sociologists who were their contemporaries. It was perhaps done too enthusiastically and too naively, since we now know that many primitive peoples whose societies seemed to offer much scope for spontaneous action because of their lack of rigid political structures were in fact rather tightly circumscribed by patterns of custom and taboo not easily evident to those who first observed them from the outside.

A realization of the simplistic character of so many early anarchist descriptions of primitive and peasant societies, and a recognition that later nineteenth-century anarchists (with a few shrewd exceptions like Malatesta) were inclined to cloud their perceptions of social realities with apocalyptic hopes, has introduced into Anarchy in Action a modifying tone.

One can hardly call it caution, since Ward never at any point retreats from the essentially anarchist view which argues the superiority of a free over a bound society. "There is an order imposed by terror", he says, "there is an order enforced by bureaucracy (with the policemen in the corridor), and there is an order which evolves spontaneously from the fact that we are gregarious animals capable of shaping our destiny. When the first two are absent, the third, an infinitely more human and humane form of order, has an opportunity to emerge."

But one can call it realism, for it is an essential honesty in the link between his perception and his statement that leads him to remark ironically that "the lutte finale exists only in the words of a song", and later to tell us that "an anarchist society is improbable, not because anarchy is unfeasible, or unfashionable, or unpopular, but because human society is not

like that, because, as Malatesta put it 'we are, in any case, only one of the forces acting in society' "

Realism of this kind is far from being an abdication of anarchist aims and principles, though it is an abdication of those anarchist 'ideals' which are embodied in the vision of a transforming revolution leading to a libertarian utopia from which some of our comrades in the past have suffered. It also involves, quite explicitly, a refusal to become involved in "the two great irrelevances of discussion about anarchism: the false antitheses between violence and nonviolence and between revolution and reform".

It is not that Colin Ward is afraid to take a stand on such matters. He is not - though he seems to respect the achievements of satyagraha - a pacifist, and he insists that "a distinction has to be made between the violence of the oppressor and the resistance of the oppressed". But the idea of violence as an inevitable and desirable part of anarchist action he clearly rejects, just as he rejects the idea that all anarchist action must be revolutionary. He is ready to explore "those social changes, whether revolutionary or reformist, through which people enlarge their autonomy and reduce their subjection to external authority".

And, indeed, he could hardly take any different view, since what he is telling us is that much that would constitute the infrastructure of an anarchist society is already present, in latent or active form, in our apparently non-anarchist society. This makes him the opposite of the thinkers who tend to regard anarchism as a destination on the horizon that will never be reached. His whole point is that anarchism talks not of a never-to-be-reached ideal, but of a basic human tendency which may never be wholly fulfilled, but which is always present and which may be cultivated so that its part in our lives will increase. Given such a view, those who say that anarchism can be advanced only by the apocalyptic act of revolution are clearly talking nonsense; reforms that widen the area of autonomous action are clearly anarchistic in their effects.

Throughout Anarchy in Action runs a strong current of counter-argument to those who claim that society has now become too complex for the simple means of anarchy. On the contrary, Ward constantly suggests, it is authority and its institutions that seek to simplify society for their own convenience and in doing so to negate its richness and to frustrate the harmony that "results not from unity but from complexity". "Anarchy is a function, not of society's simplicity and lack of social organisation, but of its complexity and multiplicity of social organisations."

Having made this point, Ward does not proceed to elaborate on the complexity and multiplicity. His aim is to suggest rather than to state, to provoke us to discover anarchy around us rather than to describe its incidence in detail.

He devotes chapters to the general discussion of such areas of anarchy in present-day life as worker's control and mutual aid as a substitute for organized welfare. He shows how governmental planning has intensified the very ills of social alienation it set out to correct, and how institutionalization has actually made criminals and lunatics and rendered old people senile and young people stupid; where libertarian solutions to the same problems - admittedly up to now on a limited scale - have had the opposite effect. He points to the steady growth of the awareness that the real problem facing society is "how to provide people with the opportunity they yearn for, the chance to be useful", and in describing the attitudes of the anti-institutionalists in the field of social re-creation, he defines the essential features of the libertarian alternative society that has in fact been growing up around us in so many directions during the past decade.

"The key words in their vocabulary have been love, sympathy, permissiveness, and instead of institutions they have postulated families, communities, leaderless groups, autonomous groups. The qualities they sought to foster are self-reliance, autonomy, self-respect, and as a consequence, social responsibility, mutual respect and mutual aid."

Throughout Anarchy in Action runs the implication that it is by their results that we must judge activities; if they tend to liberate people they are socially good and if they tend to constrain them they are socially bad. It is interesting to observe that this has led Ward to a neo-Proudhonian attitude on the question of property, so that he views with approval the fact that an owner-occupier of a house will care for it while a tenant will not, and goes on to say: "People care about what is theirs, what they can modify, alter, adapt to changing needs and improve for themselves. They must be able to attack their environment - to make it truly their own. They must have a direct responsibility to it." Proudhon's distinction between possessing for use, and the freedom and security it gives a man, and owning for exploitation is basic to practical anarchism, and one welcomes Ward's realistic acceptance of it.

Few examples are introduced of anarchy in present action, but these are striking ones, and presented so skillfully that every reader will find himself thinking of instances in his own life where, in little, anarchy has established itself. I found several coming to my own mind, virtually unbidden. I thought of the tale Fijian dockworkers had told me in 1972 on the waterfront in Suva. The previous year they and the men on the inter-island freighters had decided to go on strike against their working conditions. They had no union organization and no strike funds, since they were earning less in a week than a Vancouver docker in a day, and the big Australian stevedoring & shipping companies insisted the strike would collapse in a few days. What the White employers

had failed to take into account was the native tradition of mutual aid. Dockers in Suva had strong links with their villages and still belonged to the traditional land-holding lineage groups called 'matangalis', and what happened was that the members of the matangalis who had remained on the land every day sent food by the truckload down into Suva to feed their fellow clansmen, and in this way a tribal tradition of mutual aid defeated the authoritarian organization of the employers, for after two months it was the stevedoring & shipping companies who gave in and made an acceptable offer. I thought also of the dozens of small co-operative publishing houses and of co-operative literary magazines that I had encountered in Canada during the past five years. I thought of a small society to which I have belonged in Vancouver for the past thirteen years which has co-ordinated aid to self-help communes among Tibet refugees in India; the affairs of that society had been run without paid officials, and on the basis of discussion among active members, with decisions reached by consensus and not a vote taken in thirteen years.

I am sure that almost any reader of Anarchy in Action will similarly realize that he lives in a world where libertarian forms of action are constantly manifested, and that far from ending such manifestations, the gigantism of modern authority is encouraging them, for as Ward remarks: "The very growth of the state and its bureaucracy, the giant corporation and its privileged hierarchy, are exposing their vulnerability to non-co-operation, to sabotage, and to the exploitation of their weaknesses, by the weak. They are also giving rise to parallel organizations, which exemplify the anarchist method."

Anarchy in Action, as Ward points out, is not an entirely original work; Gustave Landauer, Paul Goodman and others have already outlined its essential idea which is, as Goodman put it, "the extension of spheres of free action until they make up most of social life". But nobody before him has encouraged the exploration of the free society present and growing among us as he did when he edited Anarchy, and Anarchy in Action puts the question more directly, and charts the area of study more clearly than any book has done before. It will become, I believe, a truly seminal book in the sense that it is likely to inspire a whole series of works exploring areas of the field and also to inspire a great deal of action that goes beyond writing. Do not be deceived by its modesty of approach. It is a major book, and, with Herbert Read's Education Through Art; Alex Comfort's Authority & Delinquency in the Modern State; and Communitas by Paul & Percival Goodman, together with some other essays by Paul Goodman, it stands among the few but important works of theoretical extension that have appeared among anarchists during the past generation.

Thanks:

Our grateful thanks to friends and comrades who helped us pay for the printing of Z No. 1 and to those who have subscribed so far - we need more money and more subs - can you help?

Other friends have helped by taking bulk orders or by getting the mag into shops - bulk 'sale-or-return' rate is 11p per copy.

Meanwhile the following magazines and papers helped us to launch Z-revue by giving free publicity or have sent us copies of their papers - we hope to review some of these in due course.

LUDD'S MILL - Committed poetry/prose magazine from Yorkshire. 10p per copy + post from Steve Sneyd, 4 Nowell Place, Almondbury, Huddersfield.

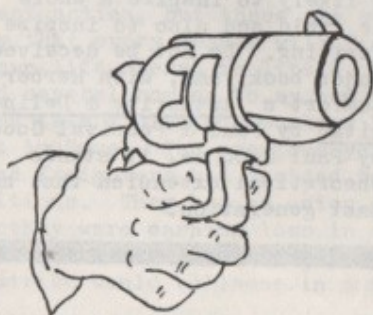
FREEDOM - Fortnightly anarchist paper and review. Commentaries on current events and reviews. 10p per copy + post from 84b Whitechapel High Street London E1.

BLACK FLAG - Monthly anarchist paper. Organ of the Anarchist Black Cross and works to support and give solidarity to prisoners. 10p per copy + post from 83A Haverstock Hill, London NW3.

PEACE NEWS - Fortnightly pacifist/anarchist paper with interest in alternative culture and communities and peace movement (is there one still?) activities. 15p per copy + post from 8 Elm Avenue Nottingham.

MINUS ONE - Egoist review with discussion material and reviews. It is published occasionally unpriced, but send 10p + post for one issue or 80p for a six issue subscription to S.E. Parker, 186 Gloucester Terrace, London W2.

BOSSES ENEMY - Birmingham produced duplicated paper with material on social aspects of the libertarian struggle. 10p + post from Paul Daniels, 36 Sandford Road, Moseley, Birmingham 13.



Tony SHIELS

Punch & Judy

There's me with my silver cups
And waving wizard's wand
Hedge, goggle-eyed all round
"Ladies and gents, in a moment I will give you..."
Give them the anarchic, the anachreonic antics,
"Ladies and gentlemen, the

There's me with my silver cups,
And waving wizard's wand,
Hedge, goggle-eyed, all round.
"Ladies and gents, in a moment I will give you..."
Give them the anarchic, the anachronic antics,
"Ladies and gentlemen, the anacreonic...
PUNCH".

"That's the way to do it!"
Squeaking randy dandy demon,
Hook-nosed,
Copper clouting,
Hunch-backed,
PUNCH.

And Judy?
Rude and Shrewish,
With a wicked smacking mop-stick,
Dies a dozen deaths a day,
And buys sausages for lunch.

It's too bloodthirsty for adults.
For those clever grown-up people,
But now, to earn my keep, I'll have to do the show again.
Let's hope it gives them nightmares,
Gargoyle-featured, freaky nightmares.
Let's hope they say the right prayers,
Or they're sure to go insane.

"Get out your shiny pennies,"
What a way to make a living.
"I'm sure you know that giving will help you win a place,
"In paradise, my beauties".
And the other line I shoot is...
"Cross my palm with lovely loot, miss, my... you've
got a lucky face".



wanted—

WRITINGS & GRAPHICS

41 Norman Street, LEICESTER

Tel. 0533 - 549652

&

please ~



Andrew DARLINGTON

ELECTRIC POET

Electric poet, I accuse you.

Erupt insane images in crazy juxtaposition
across retinal ceilings and genital basements.
Create religions out of cities,
show them gods in the visions of gipsies.
Be the germ.

You are the cerebral guerilla.

Electric poet, the word is the precision cutting tool
of mind revolution.

Sabotage the hoardings,
contradict the commercials,
translate their A.C. into your D.C.
and their D.C. into your A.C.,
work to undermine their mediaocracy.

Electric poet, They have turned the idea into a consumer commodity,
destroy them before they destroy you,
make every vowel count.

Resurrect christ in neon,
vomit Jerusalem across their screens,
masturbate the apocalypse
through their typography and headlines.

Electric poet, fuse the electric global village.

Multiply yourself across every Railway newsstand
in the country, hide within Supermarket checkout
queues disguised as trading stamps, leap out
from Bingo cards and football pools.

Mass-produce yourself,
infiltrate the somnambulistic publishing house,
besiege the television studio,
slink in shadows through cosmic airways,
dance bizarre from grooves in black plastic,
invade Sunday supplements, preach from the tabloids,
peer bemused and genial through party political
broadcasts.

Electric poet, advocate insanity, antagonise with legends,
howl at the moon, mock with mythologies,
short-circuit the neon constellations.
Speak the vocabulary of the people,
be a cerebral fifth columnist,
inspire insurrection in slums and tenements,
hypnotise the factory worker,
corrupt his children with hope and questions.

Electric poet, explode ideas.

Use the media to destroy the media.

It's the only voice you've got they'll listen to,
be brash, ecstatic, alive, and free,
and de-disinfect life.

Electric poet, there is not much time.

Do it now. This is your role.

Sing the body electric,
make the world breathe.

ELECTRICK POET. ELECTRIP POET. ELEXTRIC POET.

They fear you already,
they threaten to cut off your grants,
they attempt to censure you,
they take Allen Ginsberg to court,
they accuse you of unsanitary habits and
proliferation.

Electric poet, plead with the eyes of an Oxfam poster,
sing with the visions of psychedelic angels
down cathode ray tubes,
out-proselytize the salesman,
outbid the political con-man,
out-eulogise the capitalist,
out-argue the priest,
be ridiculous.
Fight pendulum people with visions
and subversive literature,
measure your humanity with insanity,
insult them out of apathy,
insert life into the rhetoric of the death culture.



The MARTYRDOM of MAN

Readers of Lilian Wolfe's reference to Winwood Reade's book The Martyrdom of Man in Z-Revue 1 may be interested in knowing more about this widely read but little known masterpiece and its author.

William Winwood Reade, who died a hundred years ago at the age of thirty-six, came from a comfortable middle-class family. He was a nephew of Charles Reade, the successful dramatist and novelist who wrote The Cloister and the Hearth, and when he left Oxford in 1859 he tried to follow a literary career himself. He quickly published a story called Charlotte and Myra (1859) and a novel called Liberty Hall, Oxon (1860), the latter drawing on his experience at Oxford — which he seems to have found as 'useless as Edward Gibbon had a century earlier' — and including his initiation into the Freemasons. Then came The Veil of Isis (1861), a history of Druidism interpreted as the forerunner of Freemasonry, including the first signs of his growing anticlericalism. But his books were unsuccessful, and Reade turned to other pursuits.

In 1862 he went on an expedition to West Africa to investigate the stories about great apes which had reached Europe and were arousing particular interest in the light of Darwin's Origin of Species (1859). Despite his ignorance and inexperience, Reade made a remarkable series of journeys, and on his return wrote a book about them called Savage Africa (1863). He decided to become a professional explorer, but first spent three years studying medicine, working at St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington, and then at the Southampton Cholera Hospital during the 1866 epidemic; he also published another unsuccessful novel called See-Saw (1865). In 1868 he returned to West Africa, where he travelled further up the Niger than any previous European, but where he also caught various fevers which nearly killed him and permanently damaged his health; he returned to England in 1870 and again wrote a book about his adventures called African Sketch Book (1873). In 1873 he yet again returned to Africa as the Times correspondent during the Ashanti War, and yet again wrote a book about his ex-

periences called The Story of the Ashantee Campaign (1874). But his health rapidly deteriorated, and he died of tuberculosis soon after publishing The Outcast (1874), a novel about a Victorian parson who loses his faith and is socially ostracised.

Winwood Reade was a minor explorer and an unsuccessful writer. His expeditions were quickly forgotten and so were his books, with one exception — The Martyrdom of Man (1872), which is one of the most remarkable works of the nineteenth century, causing a considerable stir when he published it at the age of thirty-three and continuing to change people's minds as it was republished again and again on into the twentieth century. The thing which did more than anything else to make the book famous — or infamous — was the author's attitude to religion. Charles Reade said in an obituary article that if his nephew had lived longer he would not only have "won a great name" as a writer but would probably have "cured himself, as many thinking men have done, of certain obnoxious opinions which laid him open to reasonable censure" (Daily Telegraph, 27 April, 1875). These opinions were most powerfully expressed in The Martyrdom of Man, in the preface to which Reade said that his "religious sentiments" were "expressed in opposition to the advice and wishes of several literary friends, and of the publishers, who have urged me to alter certain passages which they do not like, and which they believe will provoke against me the anger of the public".

These passages upset not just his friends and publisher but also, as they had warned, the intellectual establishment at large. Several papers refused to review the book at all, and those which did described it variously as "worthless", "wild", "mischievous", "vulgar", "indecent", "blasphemous", and "profane". It used to be said that the book got no favourable notice until the twentieth century, but in fact the secularist press picked it up at once. Charles Bradlaugh's National Reformer gave it a long and enthusiastic review during 1872, and the Secular Chronicle printed extracts during 1874. It soon became what one historian of the freethought movement has described as "a kind of substitute Bible for many secularists" (Warren Sylvester Smith, The London Heretics, 1967) and what its latest introducer called a "gospel for heretics" (Michael Foot, 1968).

During the century of its existence The Martyrdom of Man has sold about 200,000 copies, an astonishing achievement for an unorthodox work by an unknown author. More important, it has had a profound effect on its readers — as recalled by Lilian Wolfe. George Orwell, who called it "that queer, unacknowledged masterpiece", said that "it is probably the unacknowledged grandparent of the 'outlines' so popular today" (New Statesman, 17 August 1940).

Indeed its most powerful single reader was the author of the most successful "outline" of all — H.G.Wells, whose Outline of History (1920) sold ten times as many copies ten times as fast, acknowledged The Martyrdom of Man as "one book that has influenced the writer very strongly", and stressed its first essential aspect of intellectual unity by calling it "an extraordinarily inspiring presentation of human history as one consistent process". Orwell described the process by calling the book "a kind of vision, or epic, inspired by the conception of progress. Man is Prometheus; he has stolen the fire and been terribly punished for it, but in the end he will turn the gods out of heaven and the reign of reason will begin". (Tribune, 15 March 1946).

Orwell also stressed a second essential aspect of the book — its direct tone: "The book is, as it were unofficial history....Reade was aiming at the emancipated, at people not frightened of the truth, but his book was essentially a popular one repudiating almost from its first pages the values of bourgeois society....Reade was an emancipating writer because he seemed to speak as man to man, to resolve history into an intelligible pattern in which there was no need for miracles. Even if he was wrong, he was grown up....People felt that for once they were getting history from someone who knew the facts and yet was not a professor — not a hanger-on of the upper classes and the Established Church." P.J.Gould stressed a third essential aspect of the book — its eloquent style: "It is a passionate 'outline of history'The story of human sorrows through the ages in Asia, Africa and Europe reads like a prose drama" (The Pioneers of Johnson's Court, 1924).

These three aspects of The Martyrdom of Man combine to give the book that biblical, evangelical status which it rapidly gained and only recently lost. Like most such works however, it is curious and confusing at first reading. To begin with, it has a dual origin. Reade had intended to write two books — an historical study of the part played by Africa in the development of civilisation, based on his own observations; and a "scientific study of the intellectual evolution of man, based on his reading of Darwin's Origin of Species. But the two projects were gradually modified and eventually unified. Reade said of the former: "I was gradually led from the history of Africa into writing the history of the world"; and the latter was forestalled by Darwin's own book, The Descent Of Man (1871). Nevertheless the first three chapters of Reade's book emphasise the influence of Egypt on the Greeks, of Carthage on the Romans, of Ethiopia on the Arabs, and of negro slavery on the Anglo-American Europeans; and the last chapter of the book is an epitome of Reade's projected study of The Origin of Mind.

The construction of The Martyrdom of Man must be seen in this context. Reade divided the history of mankind into four stages — the rise of ancient civilisation from primitive culture he called war; the rise of irrational ideas about the world and man he called religion; the rise of modern Europe he called liberty; and the coming rise of man he called intellect. Chapter 1, "War", describes the classical empires of the Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Persians, Greeks and Macedonians, Phoenicians and Carthaginians, Romans, and Arabs. Chapter 2, "Religion", describes the semitic faiths of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Chapter 3, "Liberty", describes some exploits of European peoples of Germanic descent — the Barbarian invasions, the rise and fall of medieval society, the Crusades and Explorations, the growth and abolition of Negro slavery. Chapter 4, "Intellect", goes back to the beginning again, and describes the physical evolution of the universe, the biological evolution of plants and animals, and the psycho-social evolution of man; in it Reade presents his naturalistic interpretation of all human behaviour and his positivistic interpretation of all history as perpetual progress. The book may seem to be about the past, but it is really about the future — Reade looks from what man has been to what man shall be.



On a practical level, Reade expected three inventions which would follow all those made before his time and which would make further progress possible — "a motive force which will take the place of steam", "aerial locomotion" and even space travel, and the manufacture of synthetic food. On a theoretical level, he did not transcend his age — he has no doubt that modern Europe was moving in the right direction, and he had faith in the infinite power of science and technology — but he saw his age as only one in a continuous process. The next stage was the abolition of religion — "this long and gloomy period of the human race" — and the complete liberation of the human mind. Not that Reade was an atheist. When Thompson Cooper said of The Martyrdom of Man that "in this work the author does not attempt to conceal his atheistical opinions" (Dictionary of National Biography, 47: 361), he only revealed his own failure to read the work. Reade did not believe in a future life or a personal god, but he did believe in the unity of all life and in a Being beyond human understanding; he rejected deity and immortality, but accepted the fashionable agnosticism of T.H. Huxley and Herbert Spencer. He recognised the part played traditional religion in the past, but repeated that it would have no place in the future. "Men die, and the ideas which they call gods die too"; Christianity had destroyed the old religions, and now "Christianity must be destroyed" But he did not wish to destroy all religion, and he put humanism in the place of Christianity: "Those who desire to worship their Greater must worship him through mankind". He believed in the unit of man as of all life: "There is only One Man upon the earth".

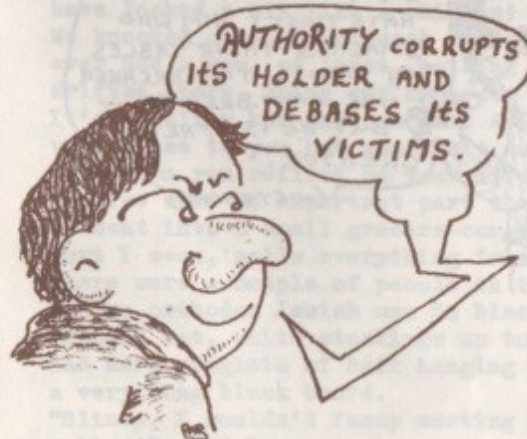
Reade's political position was ambiguous. Orwell called him "a sort of irregular ally of the Socialist movement, fighting chiefly on the religious front". But this is true only in the sense that the whole freethought tradition — whether it is called radicalism, secularism, rationalism, ethicalism, humanism, or libertarianism — may be seen an intellectual parallel to the political left. Reade looked forward to a social, even socialist, utopia — "The world will become a heavenly Commune" — but he was himself no socialist; indeed he was a member of the Conservative Party. Writing just after the Paris Commune, he called Communism "only the old caste system revived" and denied the possibility of rapid progress either through or against the state. "Human nature cannot be transformed by a coup d'état, as the Comtists and Communists imagine. It is a complete delusion to suppose that wealth can be equalised and happiness impartially distributed by any process of law, Act of Parliament, or revolutionary measure.... A government can confer few benefits upon a people." He believed in the civilising mission of European capitalism and imperialism. He believed that the liberty, equality and fraternity of the future would emerge from the slavery, inequality and enmity of the present

by a long and painful struggle.

Most freethinkers have been happy pessimists; Reade was an unhappy optimist. "I give to universal history a strange but true title — The Martyrdom of Man. In each generation the human race has been tortured that their children might profit by their woes. Our own prosperity is founded on the agonies of the past. Is it therefore unjust that we also should suffer for the benefit of those who are to come?" A century later, who can say that we are any nearer to the end of the martyrdom of man? Lilian Wolfe, who was born in the year Reade died, was one of thousands of people who have tried to hasten the process he described. After all, if there is no progress in human history, what justification is there for the martyrdom of man?

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

The Martyrdom of Man was first published in 1872, and was reprinted more than twenty times during the following fifty years, an introduction by F. Legge being added in 1910. After 1924 it was reprinted by Watts, four times with Legge's introduction, and then six times from 1931 in the Thinker's Library with a new introduction by John M. Robertson. In 1968 it was reprinted yet again by Pemberton in the Humanist Library, with a new introduction by Michael Foot (the paperback edition is still available at 95p).



AFTER CURFEW

"Probably think we
can't see 'em"
my oppo whispered

through the nightstight
clear as clear two
figures groping

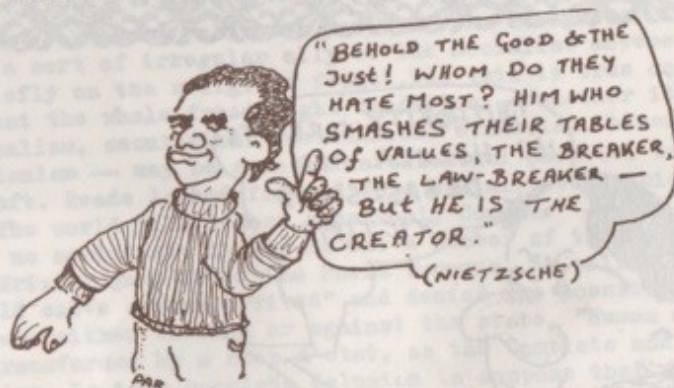
"probably planting a
booby trap" Sarge said

we shouted warning,
all by the book

they paid no
never mind, too busy

doing what they were doing

we shot..they stopped..dead
"dirty beasts" the officer said
when we got close enough to
have a proper look
"making love out there like that..
don't they know there's a war on?"



Mike Humphrey

The SMALL TICKLE or The Saga of Stoke Newington Pt.1

Monday night.

"Skint again. I've only got a bob on me" I said to Dave.

"I've got a couple of bob, enough for subs and a packet of fags" Dave retorted.

"Yeah, I've got some fags on me as well. should last me tonight" I said, "got any matches, Dave?"

"A few. We'll have to get some Mick".

Dave and I went everywhere together and we shared everything. If we only had one fag between the two of us, we'd have half each, that's how it was with us.

Dave was asthmatic and had been ever since he was a baby and it's possible that this caused him to have a barrel chest and a slightly humped back, which made it look as though his neck grew out of his chest! He was thin with dark brown curly hair, parted in the middle. In spite of his asthma he could run quite fast but not over too long a distance and could climb trees and walls better than any monkey!

Me? I was a head taller than Dave and my hair was pushed back at the sides giving a D.A. at the back and cropped at the front. Must have looked a bit like a chicken!

We knocked around with each other for about two years and hardly ever had a row, at least, nothing serious. In the end we just drifted apart, going our separate ways.

It's peculiar how one can just drift apart from someone who's been very close to you but you don't immediately feel any loss. It's only when you reflect on your life, possibly years later, that you realise what an important part they played in your life.

We went into a small grocers-cum-everything shop, you know the sort I mean, sells everything from elastic bands to rat poison! There were a couple of people in the shop and the one being served was an orthodox Jewish man in black frock coat and black wide brimmed hat, white stockings up to his knees and black shoes. He had dark ringlets of hair hanging down both sides of his face and a very long black beard.

"Blimey, I wouldn't fancy meeting him on a dark night down a coal cellar!" said Dave.

"I bet he's really a spy for Mosley's blackshirts!" I quipped.

"Wonder if that's his wife with him," laughed Dave, pointing to

the other person in the shop, a big fat raggedly dressed woman, with both her stockings rolled down to her ankles. The shop stank of pickled gherkins, paraffin and wet sawdust, and we went up to the counter and stood behind the fat lady. "See what I see beside the till, Dave!" I whispered. "I can bloody see 'em!" said Dave out of the corner of his mouth. We were always looking for something to nick, especially fags or money, but we usually only got a packet of biscuits or something. Piled up by the side of the till were about six packets of blue five shilling copper bags, the big tickle at last! The man in black walked out of the shop, waving his hands about and muttering to himself in Hebrew. "Must 'ave spent a farthing more than he intended to!" whispered Dave. As the shopkeeper was serving the fat lady Dave's hand slid round the side of the till, covered one of the bags and withdrew as quick as lightening. "Plenty of bags left," I thought, "a dollar's not going to get us very far." "Five Weights, please, an' a box of matches," said Dave, as calm as you like! The shopkeeper turned to get Dave's order and as he did I made a quick glance behind me to make sure nobody else had entered the shop, all was clear. My hand shot out, picked up another blue packet and it was in my pocket just as the shopkeeper turned round. "Anything else?" enquired the shopkeeper. "No thanks," replied Dave. "Yes, son?" referring to me. I didn't really want anything but I had to buy something to allay any suspicions that the shopkeeper might have and I bet he had plenty! I was shaking all over and my legs felt like water, I hope he didn't see me, Christ, never again! "Got any wagon-wheels?" I said to him, trying to sound innocent. I paid for the wagon-wheel and believe me, I just wanted to run out of the shop but I walked out, quite slowly, feeling as though the shopkeeper was pointing a gun on me and was going to fire it just as I reached the door! Dave was waiting outside and when he saw me a grin broke out all over his face and he shouted, "Come on Mick, we'll be late." and with that we both ran up the road as fast as we could and no-one or nothing could have stopped us. We pelted at full speed through the school gates and went straight to the boys' toilets. Dave opened the blue bag, "These are bloody farthings!" he cried as he looked in the bag. It was getting dark by this time and there was only one light on in the toilets, so to get a better look he had to tip the coins into the palm of his hand. "Christ, tanners!" he yelled.

"Bloody hell!" was all I could say. We counted the money out, five pounds in sixpenny pieces. "The crafty old git," said Dave, "does that to stop people nicking 'em. Didn't stop us though did it?" He laughed, then I laughed, a wave of relief engulfing both of us but my legs started to ache due to all the running we had done. I hadn't told Dave that I had also pinched a packet, I was waiting to see how he was going to share out his bag. I didn't think he was going to fiddle me out of my share, it didn't even cross my mind, I mainly wanted to surprise him. "That's rifty-bleedin'-see each," said Dave, "we'll have a ball in the club tonight. Pepsi's all round!" He shouted the last three words at the top of his voice. "Shut up, yer berk! Someone'll hear yer!" But we both started laughing again. "We'll have a better time than you think," I said, my hand going into my pocket, pulling out the other blue packet. "Goddin' 'ell!" said Dave. The bag I had got had five pounds in large silver; two bob and half crowns, and I counted out fifty bob from my bag and he counted the same from his, so that we would have five pounds each in mixed silver. That way it wouldn't look so suspicious. When we got into the club, we didn't go too mad with the money, except for buying Pepsi's for all our close mates and Dave went out and bought a load of fags, three large Player's each. We handed them around as though we had a tobacco plantation in our back yards, but it was all right as it was normal practice to do this when any of the lads had earned any extra money.



It's funny how some kids act, or grown people for that matter, when you've got away with something and are totally different when you get caught! There was this kid called John Coleman who must have had six or seven fags and a couple of Popsi's and was hanging around us as though we were the only friends he had in the world, trying to cadge whatever he could, yet when Dave was caught nicking a plastic wallet from Woolworth's, about six months previously, and was put on probation, this kid was going around saying things like "it's his own bloody fault, he's only got himself to blame," and "you wouldn't catch me stealing anything." Yet here he was, rilling his face with all the stolen goods he could get his hands on, the two-faced little sod!

We left the Youth club at about a quarter to ten and walked home, intending to stop on the way at the fish and chip shop. Christ, fish and chips on a Monday! Never heard of such a thing; Friday was fish and chips day, the rest of the week a bag of chips if you were lucky.

"Balls," I said, "The bloody chip shop's closed on Mondays!"

"Come on, mate, we'll go over to the off-licence and buy some Tizer and crisps," consoled Dave.

"How much yer got left, Dave?" I asked.

"'Bout three an' 'arf quid."

"Yeah, so've I."

The Youth club opened three evenings a week: Monday, Wednesday and Friday and we managed to get there on most of these evenings, going to the pictures or just hanging around the local cafe on the other evenings of the week. Weekends it was either fishing or swimming depending on season and weather.

Wednesday... Dave liberated another bag of silver from the shop and on Friday I managed another one. Twenty quid! We were living like lords, thinking we could go on like this forever, smoking large Player's instead of Weights and lighting them with Swan Vestas instead of penny week matches!

It took the shopkeeper quite a while to realise that his money was missing, so it just shows you how much profit he made out of that shop. A proper little gold mine it must have been. Most probably he's been robbing people for most of his life only he'd be the last to admit it, but I bet he'd be the first to cry "Thief!" to anyone who'd steal so much as a biscuit from him.

Anyway, Monday came round again and it was Dave's turn to try for another packet. so he goes inside, whistling his front teeth out, while I waited outside.

"Get out of my shop, you thieving little bastard!" yelled the shopkeeper. "Call the police!"

My heart sank. Dave came out of that shop as though he'd been shot out of a cannon. I didn't need any prompting, I was beside him and running like hell. We heard the shopkeeper shouting and screaming out something to the effect that the police were on their way. We

jet propelled our way down the main road, then out through some back turnings, across the common, up along Church Street and into the park. They'd never catch us. We knew this area like the backs of our hands, every alley and back turning and all the short cuts. We were sweating and heaving, and Christ, did my legs ache! It took a few minutes to get our breaths back, with Dave speaking first:

"The fat bastard, I 'adn't even nicked anything 'cos there wasn't any money there. I asked 'im for some fags and 'e started screaming at me!"

"Bleedin' 'ell, that was a close shave!" I gasped, not fully having my breath back. "It's funny, yer know, Dave, he could easily have set a trap for us and caught us red handed."

"Maybe he didn't really know who was pinching the money and didn't want to take a chance on losing any more. Still, he done us a favour." Dave suddenly burst out laughing, rolling on the grass, clutching his stomach, with tears rolling down his face.

Well, what with all the excitement and that, the sight of this made me burst out laughing as well! If that shopkeeper had come up to us at that moment, he could have led us away to the con shop and we would've laughed all the way there!

We walked around the park for about half an hour, throwing sticks up into the trees and trying to skim flat stones onto the lake to try and make them bounce, when suddenly a voice boomed out behind us:

"Oy! Stop throwing them stones, you'll hit one of the ducks!"

We turned around and saw that it was a park keeper in his brown suit and Roy Rogers hat.

"Fuck yer ducks!" said Dave.

"And you can stop that swearing an'all, you little bleeder!"

"Hark who's talking!" retorted Dave, "Who d'yer think you are, God Al-bleedin'-mighty or summat - anyway, we ain't 'urting yer bloody ducks!"

"If you're not out of this park in five minutes, I'll call the police and don't let me see either of you in here again!"

"Ballocks!" Dave swore at the park keeper.

At that, the parky tried to grab Dave, but was far too slow for him; he just stepped back and to the side, leaving the parky holding on to the wire that went round the lake. We both started running towards the park gates and when we were outside, we started singing, as loud as we could:

"I've got an 'at but it ain't like that,

ol' rotten 'at!

ol' rotten 'at!

I've got an 'at but it ain't like that,

All parkies are bar-stards!"

We lit up a fag each and just carried on walking and talking, until we found ourselves back at the common we had crossed when fleeing from the shopkeeper.

(To be concluded in Z-4)

Phil RUFF

I BELONG TO KRONSTADT

(to the tune of "...Glasgow")



I belong to Kronstadt
dear old Kronstadt town.
Whenever there's revolution
the Cheka puts it down.
I'm only an anarchist fellow
but I know where my sympathies lie.
So I'll belong to Kronstadt
and the sailors until I die

I belong to Kronstadt
Kronstadt there on sea.
Striving for self-management
and worker's liberty.
Whenever I see a commissar
I bring him down to size—
if they threaten the anarchist sailors
with discipline
they'll get a big surprise.

I belong to Kronstadt
though you might think I'm dumb,
I still believe in ANARCHY,
freedom for everyone!
So it's please fuck off to Lenin, boys
and right up Trotsky too;
if they think we'll bow to their
Bolshi-dictatorship
they'll know just what they can do!

I belong to Kronstadt
I'll tell you one more time,
don't listen to the Bolsheviks,
they'll have you down a mine!
Don't waste time with dialectics, boys —
a bullet's all they know —
we learned the hard way so we mean what we say,
let's show them who runs the show!

TROTSKY ON THE SAILORS OF KRONSTADT.

"...the pride and glory of the
revolution" July 1917.



"You will be shot like partridges"
March 1921.

Phil RUFF

YEVGENY ZAMYATIN

"The new totalitarian states, constraining their writers by directives of strict ideology and absolute conformism, succeeded only in killing the creative faculty within them. Between 1921 and 1928 Soviet literature had its glorious season of full flower. From 1928 onwards it declines and dies out. Printing, no doubt of it, goes on; but what gets printed?"

(Victor Serge)

Yevgeny Ivanovitch Zamyatin is little known in Europe and completely unknown (by decree) in his native Russia. He was born in 1884 in the central Russian town of Lebedyan, studied naval construction in St. Petersburg and became a naval engineer. Whilst still a student, he became an active member of the Bolsheviks. His first story appeared in 1908 but he didn't take writing seriously until 1911-12, when he wrote "A Tale of Provincial Life" (published in 1913), a satire of life under the Tsar. In 1914 he was brought to trial for writing an anti-militarist novella ("At The Back of Beyond") and for several years published nothing more.

In 1916 he was sent to England to supervise the construction of ice-breakers for the Russian Government. Based on his observations of English life he wrote and published two satires after he returned to Russia - "The Islanders" (1918) and "The Fisher of Men" (1922). In 1922 he was imprisoned briefly by the Bolsheviks; in the same corridor of the same prison where he had been confined under the Tsar in 1906!

During the years of "War Communism" and the New Economic Policy he became one of the leading figures in the "Serapion Brotherhood" - an experimental literary school, distinctly libertarian - and continued to write his own stories, as well as becoming involved in the theatre. In "The Fires of St. Dominic" (1923) he satirised the Soviet Cheka in the form of a historical play, with the action set in Spain during the Inquisition.

He saw before most that the Russian revolution was sliding into an omnipotent police state which was leading it towards conservatism and stagnation:

"Let the flame cool down tomorrow or the day after tomorrow... But someone must see this today already, and speak heretically today of tomorrow. Heretics are the only (bitter) medicine against the entropy of human thought."
(1923)

This is a theme which is echoed in Zamyatin's most famous work, the novel "We" (1923):

"There are two forces in the world: entropy and energy. One means blissful repose, happy equilibrium; the other, painfully infinite movement."

The idea that the possibilities for change (revolution) are infinite that there is no final revolution, is something that he emphasises again and again, as we shall see.

Though Russian - and in his stories he shows repeated signs of the influence of Gogol and other 19th century Russian writers - Zamyatin curiously enough has his place in the 'English' anti-utopian tradition also. The influence of H.G. Wells in "We" is obvious (he published a study of Wells in 1922) and there are many similarities between it and Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World". The English translation of "We" appeared seven years before "Brave New World".

The story is set in the 26th century when everyone lives in a painless single state where all traces of individuality have disappeared even names are things of the past. Citizens are known only by their number. They live in glass houses, facilitating the work of the political police; wear identical blue-grey uniforms (shades of Mao's China); eat synthetic food and spend their leisure time marching four abreast in time with the Single State's anthem which is played to them through loud speakers. Sex is allotted to the citizens at stated intervals for a period of one hour (the "sex hour") and the partners must complete the appropriate pink form and counterfoil. Nothing is allowed to go unrecorded. "Sex hour" is the only time "Unifs" (Uniform - citizen) may lower the blinds around their glass apartments.

Lenin appears in the guise of "the defactor", ruler of the Single

State who is annually re-elected by the unanimous vote of the population.

Basic to the existence of the Single State is the negation of freedom:

"Liberty and crime are just as indissolubly bound together as... well, as the motion of an aero and its speed: let the speed of an aero equal zero, and the aero does not move, let the liberty of man equal zero, the man does not commit crimes. The only means delivering man from crime is to deliver him from liberty."

Freedom and happiness are incompatible, one must choose:

"Happiness without freedom, or freedom without happiness - there is no alternative."

And to make sure that everyone makes the only choice permitted by the Single State, i.e. happiness without freedom, there is the "Bureau of Guardians" (the Cheka...). They guard the morals and behaviour of the State's "numbers". To save its flock from "deviations" the State thoughtfully provides special "Guardians" who spy on the "numbers", aided by the voluntary zeal of law-abiding "numbers" faithful to the State.

The narrator of "We" (the novel adopts the form of his diary) is a certain "D-503", an engineer like Zamyatin, who, through some abnormality retains elements of the ancient ("criminal") human instincts; he possesses an individual consciousness.

"No offence is so heinous as unorthodox behaviour", so says one of the guiding principles of the Single State. Uniformity of behaviour and thought, so basic to the nature of Leninism, rules supreme and so far unchallenged. But this "D-503" falls in love, another crime, with the female leader of an underground resistance movement ("....a still elusive organisation which has set for itself the goal of liberation from the beneficent yoke of the State") and is drawn into a plot to overthrow the State.

It is particularly worth noting that Zamyatin originally wrote "We" at the end of 1920 and into the start of 1921. The revolt of the sailors and workers at Kronstadt (March 1921), and the widespread series of strikes amongst the Petrograd workers against the "War Communism" of the Bolshevik Government which preceded it, must surely have influenced the direction of his writing.

The revolt breaks out on the "Day of Unanimity", when all the numbers are gathered to re-elect the Benefactor (the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party was in session during the suppression of the Kronstadt rising...). "D-503" is forced to escape with his lover, who is wounded, beyond the State boundary to the uncivilised world outside. Once there they plan a new revolution against the standardised painless life of the Single State. But D-503 is plagued by self-doubt and his newly discovered consciousness comes into conflict with his old self, conditioned to unquestioning obedience to the State. And here Zamyatin returns again to the question of perpetual revolution:

"...there can't be any revolution. Because our revolution... was the last. And there can't be any other revolutions. Everybody knows that."

"Dear man, you're a mathematician...even more, you're a philosopher, because of your mathematics. Well then, name the ultimate number for me."

"What do you mean? I...I don't understand - what ultimate number?"

"Why the ultimate, the supreme, the greatest number of all."

"Come, E-, that's preposterous. Since the number of numbers is infinite, what number would you want to be the ultimate one?"

"Well, and what revolution would you want to be the ultimate one? There's no ultimate revolution, that's for children. Infinity scares children, yet it is necessary for children to sleep soundly at night."

To crush the revolution the State attributes the unrest to a disease called "imagination" and announces that the nerve centre responsible for this terrible malady has been discovered by the State's scientists, who can cure the trouble by performing an operation with X-rays. The "Guardians" are forewarned of the insurgents' plans and the revolution fails. "D-503", unable to reconcile his conflicting souls, submits to the operation and betrays his comrades to the "Guardians". Freed now of his troublesome conscience, he watches his lover being tortured with compressed air beneath a glass bell. She and the other insurgents are despatched to "the Machine of the Benefactor" (a guillotine) and executed publicly as official poets recite triumphal odes in praise of the "Benefactor" and the Single State.

This scathing futuristic satire of the emerging Bolshevik State confirmed Zamyatin as a target for the new orthodoxy of pseudo-proletarian writers, who no doubt recognised themselves in "We's" Benefactor praising poets. Already under attack for his principled

opposition to the Bolshevik dictatorship (Trotsky denounced him as an "inside emigre" and "that phlegmatic snob" in his book "Literature and Revolution"...), Zamyatin was systematically persecuted and harassed, dismissed from editorial posts, ignored by magazines and publishing houses, and finally denounced by his former comrades in the writers union.

Faced with a choice between renouncing his literary work or bowing to official command, he chose to stand by his ideals. Unexpectedly in 1931 Stalin agreed to Zamyatin's request to leave Russia and he lived out the rest of his life writing, surrounded by poverty, in Paris until his death in 1937.

Although the action of "We" is set in the future - and indeed can be interpreted as a prophetic warning against statism in general - it was primarily written as a warning against the totalitarian actions of Lenin and Trotsky (Stalin at this juncture was still lurking in the shadows...). This is something that George Orwell and Gleb Struve - really the only people who were prepared to write approvingly of Zamyatin amidst the Russophile atmosphere prevalent amongst intellectuals during the 1930's and 40's - failed to grasp. Not surprising when the naive self-censorship of most writers and intellectual "fellow-travellers" at that time is borne in mind! Accurate news of conditions in Russia under the Bolsheviks was deliberately suppressed by those in the know, and observers had to content themselves with the testimonies of tame Fabians like Shaw and the Webbs, and Moscow produced mystifications. All opinion unfavourable to the Communist Party was slandered and suppressed on all sides. Orwell perhaps should have guessed "We"'s contemporary relevance sooner than most; his own "HOMAGE TO CATALONIA" and "ANIMAL FARM" had been refused publication countless times because of their revelations of Communist Party hypocrisy. Only a few books brought out by such anarchists as Voline, Berkman, Goldman etc made any attempt to tell the real story. But Zamyatin himself made no bones about the purpose of "WE":

"Having become the most fantastic country in all present day Europe, post-revolutionary Russia will undoubtedly reflect this period of her history in a literature of fantasy. And a start has already been made in the shape of the present author's novel WE."

By utilising the socio-fantasy form pioneered by H.G.Wells, Zamyatin clearly wanted "...to reveal the defects of the existing social structure and not to construct some paradise of the future." -as he wrote to Wells.

In writing "WE" Zamyatin gave new vitality to this anti-utopian form inherited from Wells and passed it on to a new generation of English writers, directly influencing the better known works of Aldous Huxley - Brave New World - and George Orwell - 1984.

"WE" and the short stories he left behind him are bitter jabs in the face of authority, orthodoxy and tradition. Zamyatin was a heretic who could never accept the status quo:

"...true literature can only exist where it is produced by madmen, hermits, heretics, visionaries, rebels and sceptics."

And where they didn't exist or were killed off he called forth new heretics in his writings. As he wrote to Stalin in 1931:

"...no creative activity is possible in an atmosphere of systematic persecution that increases in intensity from year to year."

The disappearance of anything remotely approaching literature in the Soviet Union bears tragic witness to the truth that "literature is doomed if liberty of thought perishes." (Orwell) And the state is the surest guarantee of that doom.

In an age of servile acceptance of tyranny Zamyatin's writings stand out as question marks; brilliant tongue in cheek commentaries on contemporary life, with a peculiar surreal atmosphere attached to every action. They hold up the blindness and savagery of Russia's new oppressors for all to see and mock; the irreverent mocking of a man who sees the ridiculousness of a human existence without liberty.

The following work by Zamyatin is currently available.

"The Dragon and other stories" Penguin

"We" Penguin

"Literature, Revolution and Entropy" (IN "Dissonant Voices in Soviet Literature" eds P.Blake and N.Haywood. Pantheon)



lan Seed

In Greens and Browns

Marilyn, I
could have breathed into
your dying lungs.

We could have discussed our
poetry, not in one of those
marble conversations, but in our
reactions
to instincts.

We could have huddled in
our sad smallness, two
naked children in
a heap of leaves.

But I don't really think
you would have been so intimate with
me. Instead, you would have
taken your eyes out, laid them
in your palms before me
and asked:
"Is that poetry?"



BOOK REVIEW

COLLECTIVES IN THE SPANISH REVOLUTION by Gaston Leval. Published
by Freedom Press. Price £2.00.

In a recent interview in the Daily Telegraph occasioned by his
seventieth birthday, Arthur Koestler remarked that during the 1940's
the only non-Stalinist left wing intellectuals in this country had
been himself and George Orwell. Disregarding the omission of Herber
Read, one can see that one outcome of the situation that Koestler
mentions was an all embracing unanimity on the left which stifled
any general knowledge of the libertarian position. There remains
to this day a general lack of non-Leninist intellectuals on the
left (I alter Stalinist to Leninist here not because I consider
they differ but because many contemporary leftists will accept
the latter but not the former). One of the principal areas in
which anarchism has felt this weakness has been in the analysis
of the events in Spain up to 1939, especially after July 19th,
1936.

Many books have been written on this subject, and most of them
have been interesting and informative, for people taught history
in this country usually cover a syllabus of European history dom-
inated by the assumption that Africa begins at the Pyrenees. But
all the freely available works in English have previously been
written from the standpoint of the putschist and the militarist
rather than that of the student of social developments at the
base of society. It has therefore been quite easy for anybody in
this country to study the political developments in the Republicar
government during the conflict. It has been equally easy to
acquaint oneself with the military history. And anarchists have
even been able to read about and consider the role of the anarch-
ist movement and some of its most prominent members during the
period. Vernon Richards has even written a book, "Lessons of the
Spanish Revolution", Freedom Press, quite excellent in its self
imposed role, indicating certain lessons that anarchists can draw
from the experience of their movement in these years.

But until the recent publication of Vernon Richards' sadly delayed
translation of Leval's "Collectives in the Spanish Revolution",
there has been no extensive and detailed analysis of the history

of what the people did on their own behalf and for their own ends while the war raged about them. Sam Dolgoff's collection, "The Anarchist Collectives", which borrows extensively from Leval, was published only shortly before this work, and Frank Mintz's study "L'Autogestion dans l'Espagne Revolutionnaire" is unfortunately not yet available in English.

Leval's work is a chronicle of people coming together freely into communal groups to carry on and develop their economic activity under their own control. They took over the land and decided together how best it could be worked. They established social facilities for the use of all. They adopted different methods of providing for their members, from free availability of goods to the family wage. They built schools for their children where there had previously been none, or where the previous schools had been inadequate. The concern for education among the collectives was so general that one may conclude that the desire to eliminate illiteracy in Spain was a greater spur to the libertarian revolution than some of the economic factors we usually consider primary.

This feeling was particularly strong in the rural areas, although in some ways the rural/industrial comparison is an unreal one in Spain, for the workforce in the most heavily industrialised areas were no more than second generation city dwellers. In rural areas, and especially in the South, the anarchist idea was very much of the millenarian strand, and there was a long standing commitment of the peasantry to the libertarian collectivist ideal. In the rural collectives the CNT (libertarian union) and UGT (socialist union) worked together on distinctly libertarian lines. The only factor that might seem odd to a contemporary anarchist in this country was the assumption of the virtue of the work ethic.

"One sees that work was the major pre-occupation, dominating and imposing its law on everything; there was no place in the rules for the demand for personal freedom or for the autonomy of the individual." Page 127.

Another practice that seems to sit uncomfortably alongside a recollection of Bakunin's urging to "Destroy the documents", (which the writer only recalls because it seemed so impressive and intimidating a demand when met all that time ago), was the keeping of the most impressively detailed records of the produce and the consumption and the reserve supplies of all collectives. This was done to facilitate the supply of shortages whenever they might occur, and I believe most anarchists would find such strictly

functional paper work acceptable, at least while it fell short of being rampant bureaucracy.

Possibly because there was a much greater variety of product, service and size among the industrial collectives there occurred also a greater variety of styles of collectivisation. It also appears that in the towns the poisonous proximity of various organisations committed to state socialism had an unfortunate influence on the collectivised industries. Instead of a universal commitment to the common good on the part of the collectivised concerns a few actually operated as autonomous collectives and kept their profits and surpluses for distribution to the workers in the collective. Such a lack of social solidarity was not general, though there were other aberrations in the urban collectives. They tended not to abandon money, whilst the rural collectives did so to a notable extent. Also the urban collectives were ready to offer salaries double those of the workers to secure the services of technical experts. Whether these practices were justified in the extreme situation of the time is for the reader to decide. But their occurrence is a pointer to the collectives being organised by people with an experimental approach rather than by ideological bigots intent to prove their own blueprint. As a method of social innovation I would consider the experimental one much the healthier.

To return to my opening point, the Stalinist domination of the way we have looked at the Spanish experience has led to an important misapprehension concerning the collectives. People tend to associate them with the collectivisation experienced in Russia under Stalin, which was forced collectivisation. The impression is that the collectives in Spain were imposed by CNT guns. This is so far from being true that it is almost a complete reversal of the truth, which is not unusual in the authoritarian's technique of misrepresentation. The collectives in Spain were free in that none were compelled to join them and none were compelled to remain in membership. Furthermore co-operative and cordial relations were maintained with those peasants who preferred to work on as individuals without resort to the technical advantages of collective organisation. And while the central government in Madrid was systematically depriving the soldiers on the Aragon front, who were overwhelmingly CNT members, of both weapons and food so as to bolster up and ensure the whole-hearted support of the more CP inclined troops of the Madrid front, the Aragon rural collectives fed these troops out of their own produce.

Another aspect of the Spanish experience of collectivisation which is widely ignored is that it was universally a technical success. The experience indicated that, at least in Spain during the years

1936 to 1938, by when most of the collectives had been destroyed by Stalinist thugs, people were inspired to work together for the common good. Productivity generally did increase and socially useful projects were undertaken. Both a greater area of land was planted and a greater yield per acre was achieved. These results compare uncomfortably for the Stalinist with the wretchedness and misery which was the most general result of the bureaucratically conceived and aridly administered campaign of collectivisation in Russia. But they do seem to indicate that collectivisation as a technique is of neutral value: what makes the difference is whether it is carried through as a popular activity or as an enforced policy; whether it happens in a libertarian or an authoritarian manner

But for all these smaller pointers of varying degrees of interest, the largest conclusion I would draw from Leval's excellent and fascinating study is that the Spanish collectives were able to organise and maintain production without the state, and that the whole experience was a life enhancing one for the participants. It called forth a popular resourcefulness in overcoming technical problems and a great generosity of spirit.

"There were no more orphans in Andorra or in any other collective village; all children without parents found a family." Page 125.

I recommend this book to libertarians for its detailed account of how the Spanish people sought to re-organise society in a libertarian communist manner.

As for the authoritarian socialist, with their masochistic justification of arbitrary state control, and especially to apologists of Stalin's policies in the 1930's, I also recommend it. They will read it as a fairy story.



Pete Miller.

Steve SNEYD POEMS

"Briton's Protection" Hotel

Guevara's to the bogwalls gone
with Bird & Marianne & God

looks like the
future's in

our own hands after all

just like it always was
up against the wall

SO, DON'T FORGET KIDS,
WHILE YER SMASHIN' THE
STATE, KEEP A
SMILE ON YER
FACE &
A SONG IN
YER HEART!



Prague '68

The Czechs were bounced
the cashier said
Lenin's signature was forged &
after all he had the final word
...since he employed the Guard

Owl Light

the man who gave his girl
a baby because he
had nothing else to
give her

later killed her so he would
have someone who'd
listen to him

to whit the wise the
cunning
cops

who never heard a
word he said they'd

heard it all before.



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YOU SEE THE
PROBLEMS WE
FACE?!*!

